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Virginia's Wildlife and Related Natural Resources
and to the Betterment of
Outdoor Recreation in Virginia*

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JUNE

Volume XXX/No. 6

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Cover: A picturesque adjunct of our waterways, the eastern belted kingfisher is the only one of some two hundred species and subspecies of kingfishers that inhabits eastern North America. Our artist: W. D. Rodgers, Jr., DeLand, Florida.

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EDITORIAL

A Look At Our Mail

A COUPLE of months ago we published in our "Letters" column a communication we had received from Mr. Herbert R. Walker, of Hampton, suggesting on behalf of himself and a number of hunting companions that sportsmen be sold a sticker or decal that they could display on their automobiles, to "bring in some extra money for conservation" and to "let people know that we not only hunt game but also help preserve and replenish the supply."

Surprisingly, this one letter drew greater reader response than any other single item on any subject which we can recall publishing in *Virginia Wildlife* in recent years, and everyone who wrote enthusiastically endorsed the idea! A few typical letters selected at random from our mail are published in the column to the right on this page. There was no dissent.

This willingness of our people to do more than they are now doing, and the expressed concern with the public image of sportsmen, are encouraging signs that bode well for the future of our outdoor sports and our wildlife resources.

Sportsmen already carry most of the financial burden for wildlife conservation. In Virginia they contribute well over three million dollars a year in State license and permit fees, which dollars are spent to protect and provide improved habitat for non-game as well as game species. There is no comparable contribution from any other source or sources. Not a dollar of general tax revenue is used to augment the sportsmen's contribution, although the general public as well as hunters and fishermen obviously benefit from wildlife conservation. Each time the sportsman buys a box of ammunition, whether for hunting or target practice, he may kick in as much as another 30¢ or 40¢ in federal excise tax earmarked for wildlife restoration. When he buys a new fly line or a fishhook, 10 percent of the cost goes into the kitty. Virginia's share of these earmarked sportsmen's taxes adds some half million more dollars to those paid in license and permit fees.

Still, there are sportsmen who are willing to do more than they are already called upon to do. We salute them!

As for the decals, for a number of reasons which we do not have space to discuss here, this is not a very practical or desirable way to raise funds for support of the program of the State fish and wildlife agency, so we won't be going into the decal business. It may be, however, as one of the accompanying letters suggests, a practical way of raising funds for support of private organizations, whose conservation projects supplement those of government agencies. In any event, it is commendable that hunters and fishermen want to be able to proclaim with pride, "As a sportsman, I pay my share for wildlife conservation. How about you?"

The sportsman's image in the eyes of many who do not hunt or fish is badly distorted, and his vital role in the preservation of outdoor resources for all to enjoy is not understood and appreciated as it should be.—J. F. Mc.

LETTERS

They Like the Idea

I very much like the idea of Mr. Herbert R. Walker of Hampton, who wrote in the April issue of *Virginia Wildlife* concerning the use of a sticker or decal to show that the hunter also helps to produce what he hunts.

I am a bird hunter, but always buy both State hunting and fishing licenses even though I seldom hunt or fish outside my own county.

Thomas D. Forney, Jr.
Chatham

I have just finished reading Mr. Herbert Walker's letter in the April 1969 issue and I am greatly enthused over his idea for a sportsman's decal. We need some way to let the general public know that serious and dedicated sportsmen pay for the game they take and are not the ruthless butchers they are often made out to be.

I am a freshman at Emory and Henry College. I hunt and fish every opportunity I get and I am deeply concerned over the waste and depletion of our natural resources. I know several people who are as enthusiastic as I am about Mr. Walker's idea and heartily support it.

This could be just the thing to help stem the tide of mounting public opinion which has recently risen against the sportsman.

Eddie Woodward
Jonesville

In answer to Mr. H. R. Walker's letter regarding a "decal or sticker," I might suggest he and other readers of *Virginia Wildlife* get in touch with the National Wildlife Federation, 1412—16th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036. For \$5.00 a year you can get a magazine every two months, a membership card, and a decal.

I would like to go one step further and have a patch that I could sew on my hunting or fishing jacket.

L. R. Harger
Norfolk

I, too, am an avid hunter and sportsman, and know something about the good work being performed by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. The suggestion of Herbert R. Walker in the April issue of *Virginia Wildlife* sounds good to me, but I would recommend that the decal be a bumper sticker.

Jack E. Randalon
Falls Church

... Not only I, but people I talked to, thought that it would be a successful idea, and they would contribute.

Rick Kelley
Fairfax

With reference to the letter in the April 1969 *Virginia Wildlife* proposing stickers or decals for conservation and game management, I definitely like the idea. Let's go!

Wilbur W. Nusbaum
Oakton

I was given a subscription to *Virginia Wildlife* for Christmas. I must say thus far I have been more than pleased with the publication.

In response to Mr. Walker's letter in the April issue, I would like to say that I think he has come up with a great idea. I would certainly purchase one of the said decals without hesitation.

Oliver W. Whitehead
Highland Springs

Record Turkey Harvest West of the Blue Ridge

By JACK W. RAYBOURNE
District Game Biologist

VIRGINIA turkey hunters in the fifteen counties open to hunting west of the Blue Ridge Mountains brought home the big birds in record numbers during the 1968 fall turkey season. The unusual part is that this past year's season immediately followed one of the lowest fall harvests in recent years. What happened to cause the harvest to climb from a near record low to a record high in one year? For some possible answers, let's go back a few years and see what's been going on.

The western turkey harvest has climbed over the years reaching slightly over 1,000 birds in 1962 and 1963. The harvest further increased during the years 1964, 1965, and 1966 when approximately 2,440 birds per year were harvested. Then in the fall of 1967, the bottom seemed suddenly to fall out! The harvest fell 40% or 982 birds below the 1966 level to approximately 1,460 birds. Many persons expressed deep concern over the large drop in harvest. Had Game Commission personnel overestimated the 1967 pre-hunting season turkey population? Was the population now in danger from over harvest? Indeed, many were convinced that this was the case. Some wanted to close the fall season. Others, though also concerned, thought the fall season could

be retained in the hope that everything wasn't as bad as it seemed. Fortunately, the latter appraisal was the correct one. True, the harvest had dropped greatly, but the population was stable. But why had the harvest dropped in 1967?

Game Commission field biologists were confident that winter survival of turkeys following the 1966 season was good. Food was adequate, winter conditions were not overly severe, and numerous flocks of birds had been observed during the winter. But the spring of 1967 was marked by a period of cold rainy weather during the nesting and hatching season. Exposure to cold rainy conditions during this period can be very trying on newly hatched poults. When the following fall harvest dropped, it was natural to assume that the cold wet spring had destroyed most of the spring hatch and that this was responsible for the drop in harvest.

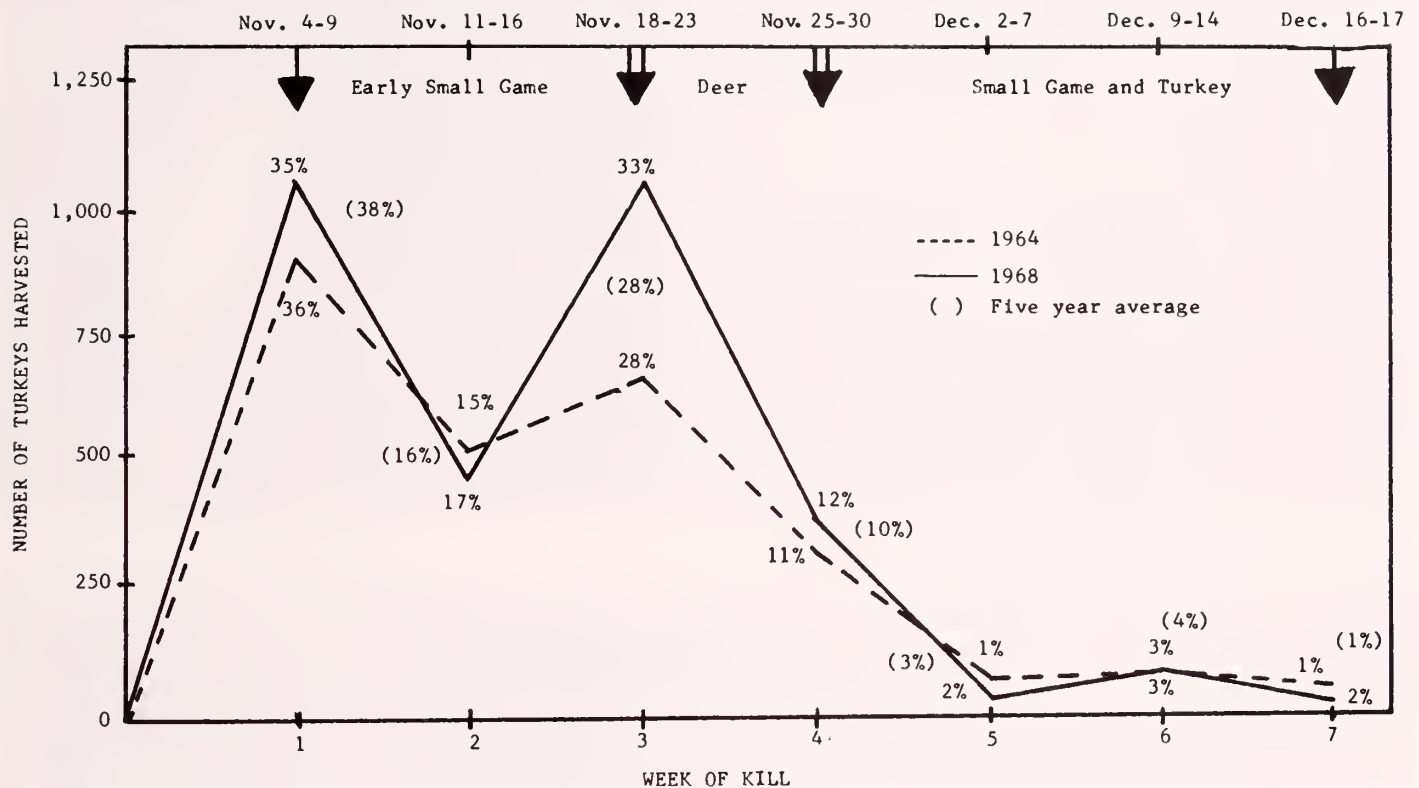
Then something happened that seemed to change everything. A spring gobbler season was again authorized, as it had been every year since its beginning. This action to some, even though only surplus gobblers would be removed, must have seemed like throwing "egg" in the face of an already declining turkey population, but when the final tags were counted, the 1968 spring gobbler harvest was a whopping

WILD TURKEY HARVEST
(West of the Blue Ridge)

1962-1968 Inclusive



PERCENT OF TURKEYS HARVESTED
BY WEEK OF KILL *



* Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Highland and Rockbridge Counties

68% increase over the previous high 1967 spring season!

"Where did they all come from?" was asked. A supposedly reduced fall population, coupled with normal over-winter losses, should have produced a *decreased* harvest, not a 68% increase! The only answer was that there had been, in fact, a good 1967 spring hatch and the birds were there all along, but simply were not seen.

In lean mast years, when natural food production is poor or spotty, turkeys and other forms of wildlife are forced to concentrate in those areas where food is present, and are therefore easier and more frequently seen. In years, such as was 1967, when natural food is abundant throughout the mountains turkeys are able to spread themselves out to the extent that they are infrequently seen or shot. The net result of the 1967 season was a high turkey population, a low fall harvest, a high over-winter survival because of food abundance and a mild winter, and a large carry-over of birds to the spring of 1968. The spring of 1968 was a favorable hatching season, and this further increased the number of birds present in the fall of 1968. The large numbers of turkey present in the fall of 1968 coupled with a slightly *decreased* food supply resulted in a record number of turkeys being bagged. West of the Blue Ridge Mountains 3,024 turkeys were harvested in the fall of 1968, an increase of 107% or 1,564 birds over the 1967 fall season. The 1968 increase alone was 104 birds more than the entire 1967 harvest! In some counties the increase was greater than 200%!

West of the Blue Ridge, the fall turkey season has remained the same since 1964. The season opened with the early small

game season on November 4 and closed on December 17. This is the fifth straight year that the two-week earlier season has been tried. This type season has been well-received by western Virginia sportsmen who enjoy the relative calm and safety of those two weeks prior to the opening of the deer season. Additionally, harvest data received from the five straight years with the same type turkey season has proven extremely valuable to Game Commission biologists, and will be of increasing value for as many years as this same type season is continued. With the knowledge gained from consistent seasons, Commission biologists now know, for example, that an average of 38% of the turkeys harvested will be taken during the first week of the small game season; 16% will be taken during the second week; 33% will be taken during the first week of the deer season; 10% during the second week; and approximately 8% will be harvested during the remaining two weeks of the turkey season. Armed with this and other harvest information biologists will be better able to predict and adjust the season to protect the wild turkey when population fluctuations might occur.

The outlook for the 1969 turkey season west of the Blue Ridge seems to be equally as promising as the 1968 season. Numerous flocks of 18-25 birds, some flocks appearing to be completely intact, were observed during the winter by both Commission personnel and local sportsmen and land-owners. Ample food is available and the 1968-69 winter was mild. These factors, if combined with a good spring hatch, should offer the sportsmen west of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains another record turkey season in 1969. Good Hunting!

THE SWEET SOUND OF SUCCESS

Lt. Col. JACK RANDOLPH
Springfield

AS usual the gobblers at Camp A. P. Hill had outsmarted me, and, as I approached the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, I planned to wreak my revenge upon shad.

The area near the power plant was deserted save for one old-timer who was spending the morning alternately making abortive casts and cussing out his reel. To restore the tranquility of the spring morning I volunteered to inspect his closed face reel to see if I could discover why it would cast no further than 10 feet.

Displaying the skill I had acquired over many seasons of reel repair I soon deduced the problem. There was only 10 feet of line on the spool.

"Huh," observed the old-timer. "One of these days I'm goin' to get a new line."

Leaving my friend with his problem I commenced to explore the Rappahannock with a pair of shad darts. A few shad were jumping but none showed the slightest interest in my lures. Then a little white perch got curious.

The perch was pathetically small, but it felt so good to have a fish on the line I let the little fellow figure eight in the water at my feet. As I watched the fish I was amazed to see dozens of shad and other fish dash in and try to rob the shad dart from the perch's mouth. The more he struggled, the more fish got into the act until, finally, a small rockfish grabbed the second dart.

After releasing the pair of youngsters I began fishing again with renewed interest. Nothing, not even a perch, would accept my offerings. Apparently the only reason the shad and rockfish became excited earlier was because of the actions of that one foolish perch that grabbed my lure.

At the time I didn't give this incident much thought. I finally found the shad eager and willing in the faster upstream water and spent the rest of the morning dealing with problems at hand. A few days later I had occasion to recollect this little episode.

The bass at Occoquan Reservoir in Fairfax County have shown turkey-like sagacity in resisting my offerings. Since the reservoir is close to my Springfield home, I was determined to solve their riddle this season. With this in mind I looked up Marty Lockard, a bass angler who had experienced several pounds of success with Occoquan bass.

Unlike many bass fisherman Marty dispensed his knowledge freely.

"I do best with sonic lures," Marty advised. "Generally I find them in the coves, but one of my favorite tricks is to work a sonic on the corners where the cove joins the main lake."

Although I have yet to prove out Marty's suggestion to the satisfaction of my fish stringer, it's not hard to see the wisdom of his approach. Occoquan Reservoir is one of those lakes that clouds up easily after a rain. As often as not the water is so murky that the fish must feed as much by sound as by sight. Weighted spinners are also quite effective in the big lake and this bears out the theory.



Spinners like this one produce sounds that attract fish.

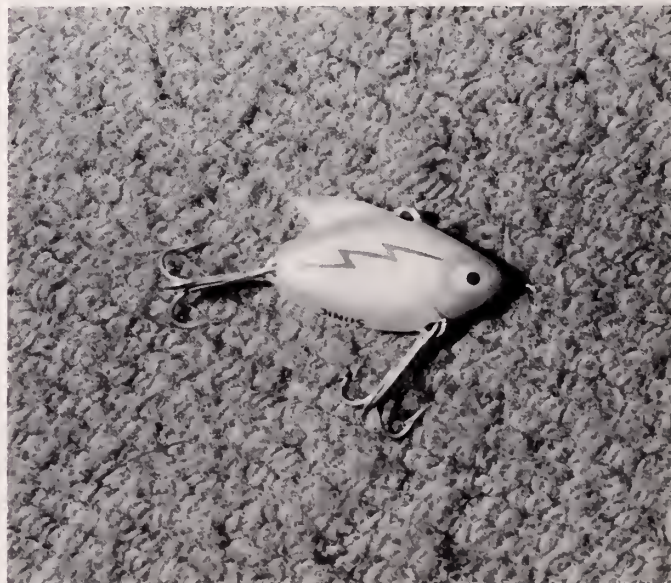
Of all the sonic type lures available spinners are probably the most popular. Many of us are of the opinion that it's flash, not sound that attracts fish to spinners. I no longer believe this is true. Many of my spinners are so corroded that they give off very little flash, yet they still catch plenty of fish. Even when I break down and polish their blades I must admit that there is little if any improvement in their attraction to fish. Some of my spinners have black blades and in some situations, such as a crystal clear trout stream, they are lethal.

A good example of the effectiveness of sonic type lures can be found on Chippokes Creek, a tidal stream that feeds into the James River and forms the border between Prince George and Surry Counties.

Chippokes is probably one of the best stretches of large-mouth bass water in the state. Access is available from Ellsworth Hatch's launching site and permits to this private area can be purchased at Goodrich's Service Station in Burrowsville on Route 10.

The creek is full of snags and hidden stumps. It's perfect johnboat water and a great place to poke a hole in a heavy

One of the most popular sound producing plugs.



This spoon operates on the sonic principle.



This five pound largemouth fell to a tiny spinner in a flooded gravel pit near Hopewell. Below: Robert Mayer of Petersburg in action on Chippokes Creek, and with a string of lunkers he took on sonic lures.



outboard cruiser. The water is often very clouded and the bass hole up hard against the steep, wooded banks or among the submerged cypress knees.

One of the most successful anglers on Chippokes was Sgt. Bill McGregor. Mac, who has put two tours in at Fort Lee, had learned the secrets of Chippokes bass. His best weapon was a heavy, size five spinner which he garnished with a strip of white pork rind.

Mac would toss his spinner with deadly accuracy, laying it tight against the bank under the overhanging bushes. Knowing that the bass hung close to the bottom he would allow the spinner to sink before he started his retrieve. Although he took lots of bass on other lures, the big spinner has been his "old reliable"—the bait that produced when all others failed.

Another successful Chippokes angler is Robert Mayer of

Smallmouth bass are not immune to sound either. On those days when the Shenandoah runs a bit murky, few lures will out-perform a weighted spinner. A split shot placed a foot above the spinner causes it to run deeper and play its tempting song to the larger bronze backs.

Judging by the reaction of the shad and rockfish that spring morning on the Rappahannock, it's probable that the sounds of sonic lures attract fish in much the same manner as the shad were attracted to the struggling perch. Sometimes we can turn a dull day into an exciting one by capitalizing on this knowledge.

One day on the Chickahominy the heavy powerboat traffic made fishing conditions quite difficult. The bass were off their feed and not a bream rose to our rubber-legged spiders. In desperation we turned to weighted spinners.

As usual the white perch were receptive to our offerings. We hit one on every third cast. On a hunch, I tried an idea. To give the fish the illusion that the spinner was a fish in



An assortment of sonic lures, and another stringer full of bass taken from Chippokes Creek by Bob Mayer on sonics.



Petersburg. Robert is one of those anglers who parlays an intimate knowledge of every stump, sunken log or boat into heavy bass. It's rare that he uses spinners but he relies heavily upon sonic plugs and spoons. His favorite bait is a sonic lure that was popular a few years ago but has since been eclipsed by more modern baits.

Robert is unique among bass fishermen in another respect. While most anglers move about and cover lots of water, Robert knows where the bass are or will be. He concentrates on one spot, sometimes for hours. Sooner or later he catches fish.

It's tough for lots of anglers to reconcile themselves to the idea that sonic-type baits often work best when operated at high speed. The faster they are reeled the more sound they produce. Sometimes in very muddy water it's necessary to reel at top speed to attract the nearly sightless fish. Few thrills compare to the jarring strike of a bass hitting a lure which is moving fast.

hot pursuit of a meal I tied a tiny shad dart a few inches in front of it.

The perch went mad. I guess they get more of a kick out of life if they think they are beating the other fellow to a meal. Most of the perch fell to the dart, but a few nailed the spinner. One five-pound channel cat also got into the act.

It has been my experience that for some reason sonic lures are at their best in either cloudy water, where fish feed somewhat by sound, or in fast water where game fish strike quickly from ambush. In the latter case it's possible that the fish hear the lure coming and are more poised to strike when it shows up.

Although theories are fine and this article is full of them, the one thing I know about fishing for sure is that no theory works all of the time. If, however, you have a few empty spaces in your tackle box fill 'em with lures that can talk. Perhaps you, too, will come to respect the sweet sound of success.

And so She Took Wing, and Flew . . .

By CORINNE ADRIA BARITEAU
Norfolk

WE held a wisp of life in our hands for four brief days—a tiny creature fashioned by God with infinite care and painstaking detail. She was utterly beautiful—a masterpiece of craftsmanship. Her delicate feathers were gorgeously marked in blue and grey, black and white, in the tradition of her species. She was a perfect baby blue jay who had tumbled out of her nest, and we joyfully took her under our wing.

We marveled at her beauty. We were awed by her delicacy. But, most of all, we were amazed at her strength. Though her tiny body felt as fragile as an eggshell, her spirit was as tough as shoe leather. Nowhere had we seen such pluck!

Our new friend was determined to fly. It was comical to see her plump little body poised for flight—her rounded chest, all feathered in baby fuzz, held so high—her expression so concentrated. No matter how many times she fell, she would pick herself up, ruffle her feathers with dignity and try again—and again. How adorably awkward she looked! We had to resist the urge to rescue her from each small tumble. A *spunky* bird all right—and *so* proud! Though she had a great deal to learn about actual flight, this little blue jay had already flown into our hearts.

Baby that she was, she responded typically to our clumsy efforts to care for her. We improvised a feeding stick to simulate a mother bird's beak and tried to deposit food in



Commission photo by Kesteloo

the proper place in her throat. We relied upon a leading brand of dog food that would supply a balanced diet, including a full complement of vitamins. We also experimented with table food, adding tidbits of peanut butter and bread, which birds traditionally like.

She struggled along with us to make the most of each morsel, though much got lost along the way. If she disliked something, she would simply spit it out, as babies will. A medicine dropper proved to be the best way to provide water. When satisfied, she would turn her attention elsewhere until we got the message.

Whenever our friend got too messy to clean off easily with a damp cloth, she was allowed to splash around in a basin of tepid water. These brief baths, followed by a romp under the hair dryer to avoid chilling, were the highlight of her day and were greeted with merry chirps of delight.

She loved to be petted and to nestle in the palm of our hand. Her fluffy head felt as soft as duck down against our cheek. And when she had had enough and wanted to roam free, her delicate wings would gently flutter, and off she would hop, daintily seeking out a new perch from which to view the passing scene. She would travel from one potted plant to another, almost losing herself among the leaves.

Sometimes we were slow to understand her needs, but she caught on to us quickly. She seemed to sense that we cared—that every peep would invite some response. How patient she was with us! Gradually we learned to differentiate between hunger and thirst, the need for freedom and exercise, or the desire for companionship. We soon recognized the soft chirps of drowsiness, when with a full tummy and a contented heart, she would drift off to sleep. Such precious trust she placed in us.

Birds find *people* interesting, too, and this one would perch close by to peer at us inquisitively through bright, beady eyes. At breakfast, for instance, she would plant herself on the edge of a place mat and watch us feed ourselves for a change. If we had to go to another room, we would take her with us, much to her delight. For this meant new territory to explore! The world of people held as much fascination for her as her bird ways did for us. But the joy she gave us was immeasurable.

Our close relationship ended abruptly. One day her spirit acquired wings of its own and quietly flew away. Her fragile body had failed to keep pace with her indomitable will. She never did learn to fly—but the Lord provides wings for those who can't make it on their own. And though her song has now become part of a larger world, her memory is tucked away in a small corner of our heart.

Young blue jay ready to test wings but not quite capable of flight.

VPI Biology Dept. photo by Mosby



Let's Cook Crab

By MARJORIE LATHAM MASSELIN
Richmond

A BARE toe is not the easiest way to bait a crab. It may succeed well enough, but success tends to discourage the fisherman. A thick slab of bacon or salt pork, secured to a line and used in combination with a crab net and a great deal of energy, is a better plan of action for assuring a satisfactory meal. I have tried it both ways so I *know*.

Just about any place along our coast where you can get into the water legally, you can catch crab. This "sooty" little creature is essentially a scavenger, which means he is always looking for a free lunch. He is not fussy—he will happily latch onto an old chicken wing left over from a beach picnic. But you have to be quick with the net. Like all freebooters he is wary. He hits and runs. This is *one* reason you need energy and stamina. The other is that there is not a great deal of flesh in the crab found in our waters, and what there is of it is extraordinarily difficult to get at, so you need quite a few for a real feast.

Demoralizing as it is to throw one back after you have fought the good fight and netted him, you may as well make up your mind to do it—*first* because it is twice as demoralizing to wind up with the wee bit of flesh you will get from an undersized crab and, *second*, because it is the only sane way to conserve the supply. The babies may be less sophisticated and easier to catch, but the oldsters are better sport and that *is* the point, isn't it?

Soft shell crab is an annual treat awaited with enthusiasm but of short duration. They are available only when the crab sheds one shell and has not yet grown another. During this molting period, the wily crustacean is more languid than usual and consequently easier to take. There is very little argument about what to do with a soft shell crab. They are at their best fried in butter, crumbed or uncrumbed. Most Virginians can eat their weight in soft shell crabs and stoutly deny the charge of gluttony.

The hard shell crab invites two schools of thought. There are those who will settle for the whole animal, boiled in sea water, and assume personal responsibility for extracting the flesh. These are people of strong character, essentially capitalistic by nature with individual initiative and the will to work. Opposed to them, there are the welfare cases who want mama to do the "picking" in the kitchen and then serve up a finished product, free of shell fragments, enrobed in sauce and, hopefully, in plenteous supply. My family falls into the latter category, so I have had to study the anatomy of the problem as a matter of simple self-preservation and ultimate survival. For what it is worth, here is my "system." If you have an easier one, believe me, I am listening!

Starting from scratch with fresh caught crabs, drop them, one at a time, into a kettle of boiling water. Use sea water if it is available. If not, heavily salted tap water will do. Add a bayleaf and a few whole black peppercorns. There are other spices that many people like to use, including a packaged "crab boil" mixture. This is entirely a matter of personal taste. Cook them for about 5-8 minutes. They will have turned red when they are done. Drain, cool, and scrub the shells.

Pull the legs off, and since these are usually too small to get the flesh out except by biting and sucking, set them aside to enjoy later. They are your bonus. Claws can be cracked or cut with scissors if they are large enough.

To get the back fin meat, insert your thumbnail or a fork under the shell at the front and pry it off. Do this over a bowl so that you can reserve the liquid. Scrape out the "green" liver, also, and save it.

If you have broken the shell properly, there will be a chunk of meat exposed. Push a nut pick or the back end of a larding needle down through the leg socket to ease it out. Be careful to watch for stray pieces of shell. Much of the shell is the same color as the flesh and it is easy to let it slip past, but it is most unpleasant to bite into bits of shell during an otherwise pleasant dinner. Continue in the manner described until you have collected all the flesh in a bowl, discarded all the shells and have a stiff neck. Refrigerate the crab meat, take two aspirin and sit down and have a cigarette before proceeding.

While enjoying your well-earned rest, you have undoubtedly been considering various recipes for preparing this day's tribute to the dinner table. The final decision, of course, will be colored by your family's known preference, the outside temperature and, ultimately, by the amount of crab meat you have in relation to the number of appetites you must appease.

One cheerful solution for ending an overcast day at the beach is to serve brimming bowls of *Partan Bree*. I am not sure that is how to spell it, really, but that is how to pronounce it. I would guess that it means '*Pot of Broth*' because that is what it is—a delightful old Scottish recipe for a creamy fish chowder—and crab meat makes it marvelously well.

Partan Bree

Simmer $\frac{1}{4}$ cup well washed rice in 2 cups salted water for about 20 minutes. The rice should be very tender. Drain it and let it cool. Then either sieve it, put it through a food mill, or dump it into a blender with 1 cup of milk. You can add one or two anchovy filets to the blender if you like.

Pour this into a kettle. Add 2 cups clam juice or other fish stock, and 2 cups crab meat. You may also add more milk if you wish, but not more than another cup, and only under duress to "stretch" it. It should have body. Bring this to a simmer and taste it for seasoning. Add salt and white pepper as desired. Let it rest.

At serving time, bring the soup to a boil. Remember this is milk and it will scorch rapidly and unaided, so *watch it*. Finish it by stirring in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream and again bringing it up to the boil. Pour it into a tureen, put a great dollop of soft butter on the top and a dusting of paprika.

Old fashioned, unsalted soda crackers or sea biscuits seem to go best with this. The recipe will serve four or five people.

For a warm evening, *Crab Louis* is an elegant offering. This salad is said to have been originated by a West Coast chef named Louis and discovered by Enrico Caruso. Legend has it that Caruso's appetite was as tremendous as his voice, and that after tasting the salad for the first time he kept the chef busy making serving after serving until the restaurant ran out of the ingredients! Whenever I recall the story, I think of poor old Louis shouting and waving his arms at a squad of harassed apprentices trying to keep the supply of fresh crab meat in balance with Caruso's demand.

Crab Louis

For four people you need about 3 cups of crab meat, lettuce and watercress for a garnish, and I like to use tomato and avocado wedges because it rounds out the salad and makes it a complete meal. Figure 1 tomato and $\frac{1}{2}$ an avocado per person.

Remove the stem end from each tomato and cut into quarters. Peel and halve the avocado and cut each half into four strips. If you do the avocado ahead of time, be sure that you douse it well with lemon juice to prevent discoloration.

Crab Louis should be presented as individual servings, so arrange the greenery, well washed and crisped on plates. Use just enough of the sauce to enrobe the crab—that is, to hold it together nicely—and then mound it in the center of each plate of lettuce. Place four avocado strips at regular intervals around the crab and lay a tomato wedge on top of each avocado strip.

Sauce Louis

This can be prepared early in the day and refrigerated so that the flavors have time to “marry.” It should not be kept any great length of time, however, because the parsley will deteriorate. Mix the following ingredients, taste and correct the seasoning as desired:

- 1 cup mayonnaise, preferably some you make yourself
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream or fresh cream, whipped stiff
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup thick chili sauce
- 1 Tablespoon horseradish
- 2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons minced parsley
- 3 Tablespoons minced shallots or green onions (white part only)

Salt and cayenne pepper or tabasco to taste

At serving time, use the rest of the sauce—that is, what was not used to enrobe the crab meat—on top of each mound of crab meat.

Essentially, *Crab Louis* is a first course for an elaborate dinner. Using it as such, you would be considerably less lavish in the size of each serving.

If you are stuck with a family of die-hards, I suppose you will have to make *Deviled Crab*. This is usually put back into shells, crumbed and baked. Frankly, I think it is a great bore and I always wind up with shells that are a variety of sizes, so when I make *Deviled Crab* I often butter a shallow casserole and serve it straight from the oven like that.

Deviled Crab

Start with an ordinary Bechamel or white sauce, the proportions for which are 2 tablespoons each of flour and butter and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt per cup of milk or cream. You will need a cup of sauce for each pound of crabmeat, and we will assume you have a pound.

Enrich the basic sauce with an additional tablespoon of butter and add a squirt or two of Worcestershire sauce and cayenne pepper to taste. Beat the yolks of 2 eggs and pour a little of the hot sauce into them, beating with a whisk all the while. Then reverse the process and pour the egg-sauce mixture back into the rest of the Bechamel. This is done off heat.

Into the sauce put all the crab meat, liver and liquid and I use about $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh bread crumbs. This is a debatable issue. There are those who prefer to add 2 hard boiled sieved or finely chopped eggs.

Either put the mixture in the casserole or pile it into shells. Top with a sprinkling of dried bread crumbs that have been tossed in melted butter, dust with paprika and bake about 15 minutes at 375 degrees.

My Favorite River —

THE UPPER RAPPAHANNOCK

By TOM BROADDUS

Petersburg

MORE has been written about the upper James River and the Shenandoah River, but the Rappahannock is second to none.

There is no place more serene than the upper Rappahannock River as it flows from the mountains down to Fredericksburg—a clean, unpolluted river, where one finds the cycle of nature at its best.

The Rappahannock is practically mud free, as most of the bottom consists of gravel and sand. In abundance are large rocks, which have been worn smooth by the flow of water over the years. The river abounds with smallmouth bass, rock bass, and sunfish. The fish are of the finest quality—fat, firm, and packed with action.



The clean, unpolluted upper Rappahannock.

In fishing the Rappahannock for the last ten years, seldom have I failed to catch my limit. The lure that has proven to be most effective for me is the Mepps Spinner. This lure is easy to use, whether you are in a deep pool or in the swift rapids.

My favorite way of fishing is wading—wearing old pants, tennis shoes, and tying a stringer on my belt. However, on several occasions, with friends, I have put a boat in six miles above Fredericksburg, and floated down to Motsy's Run, a full day's trip. To make our float trip complete, we stop about halfway down and fry up a mess of fish. Add hush puppies and sliced tomatoes to the menu, and you have a meal fit for a king.

It is not unusual to see a deer crossing the river, a herd of goats on a high cliff, or to hear the gobble of a wild turkey along the river bank. In this day of ulcers and tranquilizers, there is no better way to get away from it all.

Pardon me while I get my fishing gear together.

TOM REALLY WASN'T MAD

By ROBERT W. OLMSTEAD
Mansfield, Pennsylvania

I WAS still a good many years before manhood when I undertook my first man's adventure. The adventure itself was a fishing trip to Virginia's Shenandoah River, and for any full-fledged man the adventure would have officially begun with the setting up of camp; for me it began earlier.

It began at night on the banks of a slow, tepid Virginia stream not far from the old Civil War battlefields of Manassas. There were three of us, two men and me. We were there to seine madtoms.

For the uninitiated, the madtom is bass bait. He's a little catfish that really isn't. I guess he's kind of a cousin to a catfish, but a catfish like other catfish—he ain't. In the first place, he's small. Not little small, nor quite tiny small, simply small. Most are about three inches long with a five inch not uncommon and a seven inch rare. I once saw one that would have to have bent to get into an eight inch box. (Typically, he got eaten by one of the two smallmouth bass I've seen that were big enough to break the world record. This one only broke a rod and line though, and for all I know he's swimming there yet in Virginia's James River—but that's another story.) I doubt that there's another madtom as big as that in all creation. In addition to being small, the madtom has three spikes. They're just like those of a catfish, except they are tiny and needle sharp and tipped with a mild poison that causes your hands to smart and itch. The sting was much like the sting of a Chesapeake Bay jellyfish. You could handle quite a few carefully without getting stung, but sooner or later you were going to get it. By the end of the evening if you had less than a half dozen stings you were very lucky. The madtom has a tail fin that runs all the way around his posterior like that of an eel, or grindle. A baby catfish has a tail fin just like his parents, only smaller, and though we often seined them together there was never any doubt as to which was the catfish and which was the madtom. The bass could tell the difference, too, and the madtom was surely tastier. (They preferred him three to one in a test a buddy and I conducted many years later.)

The June evening was warm. It was just twilight when we began organizing ourselves on the banks of the little stream. There was the seine, the spare netting, minnow buckets, lights, boots or tennis shoes to don, insect repellent to use on our heads—it would last half an hour or so—and a hasty discussion as to whether we should go up the bank and seine downstream toward the bridge and the car, or whether to start at the bridge and seine upstream. I have long since forgotten the reasons, but we started at the bridge.

The stream was a mystical thing in the gloom or early evening. Its black waters glistened; its shallow little riffles tinkled merrily; the water was cool to our legs and feet, not chilly or cold, just pleasantly and relaxingly cool. As we seined our first two holes—which produced no madtoms—the night came on with a rush.

The night was a mysterious thing and I was in awe of it. Our kerosene lanterns and flashlights cut the darkness, but their effectiveness was limited and beyond their range was the night. What I could see was close at hand; relatively formless images of men, water and trees and brush, and the close-up detail of the minnow net and its writhing contents

when the drag was completed.

I'd often go ahead of the men who were dragging the seine and wait for them. Then while on the edge of the darkness I could hear the sounds of the night. You think you know what night sounds are, frogs, crickets, owl, but until you are out there with them you really don't know. The sounds are amplified in the clear cooling night air; there is life and mystery right next to you. It is exciting and a bit scary to a boy of twelve. I could identify very few of the sounds I heard. I knew the croak of a bullfrog and the high whine of the cricket and other insects, but there was so much more to hear. The gentle voices of the men talking to each other and the sound of the stream tumbling along were a comforting background to the sounds of the night. The bushes ten feet from me rustled, a screech owl made his terrible sound not too far away. The forest and the stream and the creatures of the night combined in a cacaphony of sound that can never be described and can only be experienced on a southern piedmont stream on a June night by a boy of twelve.

The peculiar odor of the stream has left a lasting impression. The odor seemed to spring from the water as the net stirred the rotting vegetation on the bottom. The odor was strong but not unpleasant; it was distinctive, yet unchanging. It was part of the mystery of the night and left its own impression on a mind that was hungry for such impressions.

When the net was pulled up after a drag, it was full of all manner of wonderful life. There were always crawdads and leeches, small freshwater snails, hellgrammites, small larvae of one kind or another, minnows, bluegills, little bass, little branch pickerel and madtoms. We tried to get everything out of the seine but the madtoms, so we could dump them into the minnow bucket without having to handle them. It never seemed quite possible. There was always the necessity, or perhaps more challenge than necessity, to catch a few toms in your hand for transferal to the bucket.

The night cooled fast and after a few hours of work—the men called it work; I couldn't imagine doing anything more exciting and interesting; I could never have thought of it as work—they began to check the bucket to see if we had enough. We wanted several dozen for the five-day trip, but expected to seine on two nights. Our goal was one hundred toms each night. All too quickly we reached the magic figure and the night came to an end. We walked back along the bank to the car. I trailed along behind with a bucket full of water and angry Thomases. I was slow; they yelled at me to hurry and keep up. In all honesty, I could have kept up but I was leaving and I didn't really want to. I lagged behind as far as I dared, or cared to, savoring the sounds of the night, the delightful coolness of the air and the feeling of the weeds that slapped against my legs as I walked along the bank. The weeds were wet with dew, a dew that was cold against my already wet legs. I looked up at the moonless sky and watched the clouds drift in fast to blot out the cheeriness of the few stars that were still unhidden by the vapors. Before we reached the car it had begun to rain, not hard, just a gentle, steady summer rain. When we reached the car, we quickly changed into dry clothes and headed home. I sat in the back seat and listened to the wind of the car's motion, the rain and the tires hissing along on the dirt road which was now a mud road. I looked up and saw the rain running down the back window of the car. I smelled the cigar smoke from the front seat, heard the water and the madtoms sloshing in the trunk and felt very big and very noble, and somehow cleansed, and for the first time, really alive—and very tired.

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

CONSERVATIONGRAM

Commission Activities and Late Wildlife News . . . At A Glance

16,564 SUBMIT WILDLIFE ESSAYS. A total of 16,564 students submitted essays in the 22nd Annual Wildlife Essay Contest sponsored jointly by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League of America. "Clean Air" was the theme for this year's contest. Five hundred twenty three Virginia schools were officially entered.

The prize fund was fattened after the contest was first announced and the top prize, a \$1,000 scholarship, was followed by a second prize of a \$400 scholarship. Some 229 cash prizes in all were awarded. Thirty-seven schools qualified for 100% participation awards by having all eligible students submit essays.

HUNTING APPROVED FOR SAYLER'S CREEK PARK. The second cooperative hunting agreement between the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Department of Conservation and Economic Development, Division of State Parks, will open Saylor's Creek Battlefield State Park to hunting this fall. The agreement will give hunters full use of nearly all of the 240 acre area in Amelia and Prince Edward Counties. The initial agreement involved a portion of Fairystone State Park near Philpott Reservoir.

The Saylor's Creek area was the location of the last major battle of the Civil War. On April 6, 1865, over 100,000 men were engaged in what historians claim brought about the inevitable surrender of Robert E. Lee at Appomattox three days later. The battle cost General Lee most of his supplies and a full corps of men when, early in the afternoon of the 6th of April, Confederate General J. B. Gordon's Corps and the supply wagons he was guarding, veered from the line of march causing a gap in the ranks. This in turn enabled Federal cavalry under General George Armstrong Custer to pour into the gap and sever Lee's force. Over 8,000 troops were taken prisoner at the end of the engagement, making it the largest number of men ever taken prisoner in a single action on this continent.

Most of the area has been in cultivation on a share-crop basis and the Game Commission under its agreement with the Department of Conservation and Economic Development plans to continue this policy, with attention to crops and practices that will most benefit wildlife. It is expected to offer good hunting for quail, rabbit and doves with some opportunities for deer and other game.

The park lies east of Farmville and is reached by way of Route 617. The area will be posted with public hunting signs prior to the opening of seasons this fall. The public will find the park open year-around with the Visitors Center, famed Hillsman House, open from May 15th through Labor Day.

COMMISSION APPROVES HUNT SLATE. The Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries has approved fall hunting regulations which will give bear hunters a longer season and will move the Eastern turkey season into November.

Deer hunters will be faced with seasons and limits nearly identical to those in effect last year. Although bag limits will remain unchanged in Albemarle, Fluvanna and Louisa Counties, doe deer will be legal game on the last of the season only. Surry County was granted 12 days of either sex shooting on the last 12 hunting days.

The Eastern fall turkey gobbler season will begin November 17 with the deer season and end December 20. The Western turkey season will open 2 weeks earlier and close on the same date. Bear season will open on November 10 and close December 31.

A spring gobbler season for 1970 was approved with Buchanan, Buckingham, Caroline (private lands), Dickenson, Highland (private lands), King and Queen, King William, Lee, Russell, Scott, Spotsylvania and Wise Counties exempted.

Proposals to permit the use of air boats on Back Bay for hunting, and for fishing from April 1 through September 15, were approved.

IT'S been two years since I began seriously attempting to identify and photograph birds, and after 21 months of chasing our fine feathered friends, one fact has been stamped indelibly in my mind: bird watching is one of the most unpredictable of all hobbies!

I have sat hours in a blind to photograph herons, and had those very birds walk to within 10 feet of me when I did not have a camera. I have seen 10,000 geese on a lake where all times previously I had seen less than 200. And I have had ruffed grouse walk circles around me while I, with neither camera nor gun, watched helplessly. So, after two years of this, I am convinced that when the birds and I get together, just about anything can happen!

My first lesson in the unpredictability of bird watching started the December I drove to Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge on the North Carolina Outer Banks to photograph the snow geese that winter there. On my second day in the Refuge I saw my quarry—perhaps a thousand strong—feeding quietly in open marsh a hundred yards away.

Slowly I stepped into the open and began to stalk the birds. I took two steps and stopped. The birds looked up, then resumed their feeding. I stepped again, then stopped, feeling cold water and mud seep into my boots. Then unexpectedly, six black ducks zoomed in over the marsh, honk-

Above, right: Snow geese at Pea Island Refuge in North Carolina. Below: A little blue heron atop a rotting pine stump beside the Intracoastal Waterway.



The Birds and

ing loudly as if to warn the geese of my presence. They succeeded, for a second later the ground erupted in an explosion of feathers and loud "whouks" as the geese took flight.

It was then I remembered the words of another bird watcher I had talked to earlier that morning: "You can't stalk birds like you can some animals," he said. "The best thing is to just wait in a blind and let the birds come to you."

I remembered his advice on my next bird spotting expedition to a farm pond the following spring, and it was then I was reminded once again just how unpredictable this bird business really is. I never made it to my blind, for as I neared the hiding place, an osprey appeared overhead. It was the first osprey I had ever seen, and I watched with camera in hand as it hovered high over the water, swiftly plunged feet first into the pond, and emerged immediately with a large bass in his talons.

During the entire drama I stood frozen on the bank, not even thinking of photographing the action. It was not until the bird had left that I suddenly realized I had just missed the pictures of a lifetime!

After this lesson I should have learned to expect the unexpected each and every time I went searching for birds, but I had still another episode to suffer through a few weeks later when I absent-mindedly left my camera at school as I drove home for a weekend.

As I dozed in the sun by the edge of the lake behind our home, I saw a green heron land on the rocks not 10 feet away. Horror of nightmares! Here was a bird I had waited hours for in blinds but had never seen close-up. Now I had one less than a dozen feet away, and no camera!

The bird stepped slowly along the rocks, his unblinking yellow eyes never moving away from the water. He was fishing for minnows often found near the shore, and after each step he froze motionless for several minutes before moving again. Often he stopped with a foot in midair. He did not catch a minnow as long as I watched him, and though





Text and Photos by STEVE PRICE
University of North Carolina

I was just a few yards away, he paid not the slightest attention to me.

It was mid-afternoon when I watched the green heron, but many birds are frequently seen during the more inconvenient times—such as late evening or early morning. As usual, unpredictability is the key word here, too, at least in my case.

I'll never forget getting up early one morning last October to take a bird-watching cruise up the North Carolina Intracoastal Waterway. It was dark when our boat left the Morehead City waterfront, and a chilling Atlantic wind had

Birds like the Canada goose are hard to stalk. It is better to sit in a blind and let the birds come to you.



me wishing I'd taken up a different hobby.

The sun rose slowly as we chugged up the Waterway, and it was an hour later before I finally saw what I had come to see—a Little Blue Heron sitting quietly atop the stump of a rotting shore pine. With the sun directly behind him he made a perfect silhouette, and the one photograph I took then made me forget the earlier discomforts I had suffered.

During that cruise we passed a small island, and as we did it seemed as if the world suddenly resolved itself into birds, for the sky filled with literally hundreds of startled egrets, herons and gulls that had been nesting on the island.

This was Starvation Island, a 30-acre stretch of mud, scrub brush and sea shells in the Waterway just north of Morehead City. Although it is owned by Llewellyn Phillips of Morehead and may soon be developed into vacation lots, today it is one of the few heron rookeries in the state. Two weeks after the cruise I returned to the island to photograph the herons and egrets there. An unpredictable spot? I'll say!

Almost immediately after landing on the island I startled a dozen common egrets wading along the water's edge. Seeing me, they took flight, but not away as I expected. Instead, they began circling slowly overhead, flying gracefully against a stiff wind with their long necks bent in the familiar S-curve. It was as if they were putting on a special air show just for me.

A few minutes later I was sitting on the bank writing notes of my observations when a low squawk interrupted



This immature little blue heron and I watched each other. He still showed a remnant of immature white plumage on the under side of his body.

me. Turning slowly and reaching for my camera at the same time, I discovered an immature little blue heron standing on the shells not 10 yards away.

We surveyed each other for perhaps half a minute before I trained my telephoto lens on him. Click! The bird did not flinch, but instead boldly moved a step closer. Then, satisfied with this view, the bird managed a slight hedgehop and landed 10 yards behind me. Again we surveyed each other, and I noted his dull greenish legs, white chest and dark plumage.

Then, tiring of this view and possibly sensing I had just run out of film, the bird climbed gracefully, circled once, and headed toward the mainland.

So now I am entering my third year of bird watching and photography. What do I have to look forward to? Quite a bit. I'd say—a few more chances to see birds close up in their natural habitat, perhaps another chance to photograph a diving osprey or a fishing Green Heron.

It's all quite unpredictable, but I don't mind—the experiences themselves more than make up for it.

First Summer

By CARSTEN AHRENS
Pittsburgh

MY new campground, well back from the road, was opened for the first time last summer, so I'm a very new proprietor. However, I found my experience interesting, and I'm looking forward to next spring when I can remove the "Closed for the Season" sign.

Everyone told me to expect the worst: the flush toilets would be blocked up, the twenty-five picnic tables broken up for firewood, fires built on the grass instead of in the fire-rings, campers' initials carved everywhere, four-letter Anglo-Saxon words smeared over the comfort station walls, flowerbeds ruined, rules and regulations ignored. Adults would sit in and break down the baby swing set, etc.

I didn't pay the detractors too much heed because, years ago, I had been a summer-time ranger naturalist in the Acadia and Yosemite national parks. They called us "90 day wonders" because we were supposed to know everything about everything! Then I learned that folks who camped out were apt to be rather superior people, and even though my ranger days were back in the '30's and '40's, I didn't believe the character of campers would have changed so radically in a quarter of a century.

Then, too, my family and I had done considerable tenting. When my children were in their teens, we visited many national monuments and all of the western national parks except two. Crowded as we often were in the campgrounds, we could always take a trail that would lead us upward to vast spaces with wind, rain, sun, and unimpeded panoramas galore. Yes, I've always enjoyed camping and campers, so when I retired, I returned to my boyhood haunts and made one of them into a campground. My old treehouse had long since rotted away, but the tree was still standing. My old swimming hole was now a part of a nearby state park.

Few of my friends' fears materialized. When I gave the tables a coat of varnish just before closing time last fall and tilted them so that water wouldn't stand on their tops, I found no injury except for two cigarette burns. The only destruction in the flowerbeds occurred when some children pulled off the great leaves of a giant castorbean (to use as umbrellas), but the mutilated plant put forth new leaves in such an amazingly short time that the injury was soon unnoticed. Next year I'll find something less tempting to plant . . . probably seed dahlias. A sign, "For Tiny Tots Only," reserved the swing set for the kindergartners.

The walls of the toilets were unmarked except for one sentence which I obliterated with a slap of a paintbrush. Late in the season I was expressing my satisfaction over the lack of graffiti in the washrooms to a group of hippies.

They listened gravely; then a blackbearded and much medal-lioned one, who impressed me from his arrival as my notion of John the Baptist, answered seriously:

"But I like sex. I find a toilet much more interesting if it is all written up with sex." It could be this lack was the reason they remained but a day in camp. Incidentally, I had but two groups during the summer of these highly-colored birds of passage, and albeit bizarre, they followed without protest the simple rules and regulations of camp.

About 700 units, each made up of one to twelve persons, camped one or more nights. Less than half asked for electricity. Just about $\frac{1}{4}$ set up tents of all types, sizes, and colors; about $\frac{1}{2}$ used car or truck trailers and campers; and the rest slept in their cars or station wagons, or just out in bed-rolls or blankets. There was a radical change since my ranger days toward unheard of luxuries in the woods . . . like color TV sets and electric blankets. One observation held true from the old days: the old-timer had a minimum of equipment; the tyro had lugged along three times as much stuff as he could use. The majority of my campers were families with pre-teenaged children and carefree couples of all ages.

Since I taught biology classes before retiring, it was just natural for me to attach labels printed with waterproof ink to shrubs, trees, and many flowering plants about camp. Included on each plastic tag was the common name, its scientific name, and some fact that might help the reader remember the species. Since an old and young tree may be quite unlike, I labeled the same kinds several times in the grove. Some campers, of course, never noticed the tags . . . they were always small and unobtrusive . . . but the majority did and many expressed their appreciation for being introduced to these natives. I have a letter before me from a camper who expresses his delight and surprise that the red, swamp white, and pin oaks, and the silver and red maples he had learned in Ohio also grew in Pennsylvania. And he'll learn he'll meet them in many other places too. He'll have lifelong friends everywhere!

The first summer didn't make much of a dent in the sum I had invested in the roads, water system, sewage disposal plant, etc., but this was a first season and I'm inclined to believe the second will be better. The camp, including the overflow area, was filled to capacity on only two weekends: those of July 4 and Labor Day. I was surprised that camping stopped abruptly with the Labor Day week-end when some of the best days of the season occur. Along with bright blue weather are such off-season bonuses as leaf coloration, bird migration, fewer insect pests, less traffic, and improved fishing. This may be one fact about the camping year that many out-of-door folks have yet to learn.

Were I planning my camp again, I would install fewer charcoal grills. Campers carry modern stoves that are immediately usable. But there are always unhurried folks who used the grills so I always kept wood and charcoal available.

The fire rings . . . metal circles cut with a blowtorch from what had been an old road culvert . . . were popular. The campers would bring their folding chairs for a campfire and have a "sing" that often went on melodiously far into the night. Usually some tender had along a guitar or other instrument and we traveled from "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia" to "By the Time I Get to Phoenix."

Camping seems good for people. One young father confided: "Do you know the winter's not going to be so bad just knowing about this woods and that I can camp out here for a while next summer!"

HOW TO DO IT:

Float Fishing on an Inner Tube

Text and Photos by CALVIN A. DEVINEY

Miami

ALARGE inner tube as a fishing vehicle has several advantages over a boat, only one of these being the price differential.

The tube is light for transporting in a car or for carrying back through miles of fields or brushland to your favorite and hidden fishing hole. It is also deflatable and easily packed when on an extended trip.

When fishing in streams, one may walk across the shallower spots and then float through the deeper holes. Deep rivers, canals, mud ponds, or deep lakes—none present a problem to an inner-tube fisherman. Also, he has a quiet approach to his quarry whether on land or in the water.

Fly fishing, or with a spinning or casting rod, all tackle is easily handled from a tube. Pockets in the canvas of the tube or a fishing vest will carry all the spare lures or fishing hooks and accessories you need. Towing another tube behind you could contain an ice chest full of goodies and liquid refreshments.

A quick innovation to this might be to replace or substitute for the canvas a rope sling to sit inside the tube instead of making the canvas harness. Even tying a set of large pants or the seat of some old waders inside the tube would give the needed support to float fish.

For yourself, or with a fishing buddy on another tube, give it a try and good fishing is yours. You might even end up with your entire family on separate tubes making float trips down the rivers when they see how much fun you're having.

How To Build Tube Harness

1. Stretch canvas out flat on ground, place inflated tube in center and fold canvas back in and over the tube.

2. Mark and cut canvas on inside of tube where it reaches bottom of tube and canvas piece so that they may be joined together later.

3. Pierce canvas at cut edge and also at bottom completely around tube circle so that grommets may be installed. Install grommets. Cut hole for tube valve, reverse edges and sew.

4. Lace the canvas together with stout rope through the grommets. Tube is now protected and completely covered over except for hole cut for tube valve. Valve should project outside canvas for easy filling and deflating of tube.

5. Cut leg holes in bottom canvas, fold edges back and sew them at all cuts so the canvas won't rip at a later date.

6. Loosen grommet line and sew pockets in to carry extra fishing gear or other accessories. A few small holes on opposite sides or ends of tube canvas will allow short pieces of line to be installed and can be used for attaching anchor line, fish stringer, etc.

7. Tighten grommet lines back up, and "Good fishing to you."



Peace and quietness reign over the waters as the fisherman sits in solid comfort in his tube with nothing to do but fish.

A stringer is easily attached, and here is proof of the good and easy fishing available to the tube man.



OURS TO KEEP AND ENJOY

By W. ALAN GUTHRIE
Game Biologist

FINALLY the long anticipated time had arrived. Billy had been looking forward to this day for months. His grandfather had promised to take him camping late in the fall, and for a 10-year-old boy this would be a real thrill. Grandfather promised to teach him the fundamentals of hunting, take him fishing, teach him how to be a good camper, and teach him about the wonderful world of Nature. This would be a grand experience for Billy.

Grandfather came by the house to pick up Billy. The old model car was packed with camping equipment, fishing gear, grandfather's shotgun, and more paraphernalia than Billy could imagine!

Shortly after arriving in the forest, Grandfather and Bill had camp set up. What a spot! They had seen deer, squirrels and grouse on the way in, and now they had a camp set up right beside a beautiful bubbling stream where trout were abundant. With hunting and fishing seasons being open, this should be an ideal area, and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Billy was so elated that he could hardly contain his enthusiasm.

Most of the morning was spent getting everything in camp just right. After all, they would be here for several days. An adequate supply of firewood was cut. Billy had to work hard helping Grandfather with all the necessary chores but every minute had been fun. And Grandfather had taken advantage of every opportunity to teach Billy. He had told him about the different kinds of trees, how each was beneficial, and the role each played in the forest. Billy was learning more than he could imagine. How wonderful to have such an opportunity!

Early in the afternoon, Grandfather got the shotgun and he and Billy set out to look for game. Grandfather pointed out likely places for various species of wildlife and took time to explain why each area was attractive for wildlife. He was particularly careful to teach Billy how to handle a firearm safely and to explain that it could be either a valuable tool or a dangerous weapon in the hands of a careless, non-thinking individual. Grandfather really wanted to drive this message home, and although he was anxious to bag some game, the safety lesson was of prime importance.

As Billy and Grandfather slowly walked along an old trail, Grandfather suddenly heard an old familiar sound, one which stopped them cold in their tracks. Just ahead in the trail lay a large rattlesnake with his tail singing loudly! Grandfather shot the snake, and on the ridge just ahead quite a commotion attracted their attention. They had flushed a flock of turkeys! In killing the snake, they had erased a possible opportunity to bag a turkey. But even to see them was an experience for Billy. The hunt did not prove to be fruitless because they did bag a couple of squirrels which would make a fine supper. And they had seen other game and Grandfather had pointed out signs of wildlife to Billy. He was learning far more than he ever dreamed about. But it had been a tiring trip for a young lad.

Back in camp, Billy learned how to prepare squirrels for a meal, and he had no trouble getting rid of his share of the food. Somehow this meal seemed much better than any

Billy had ever eaten.

Following supper, Grandfather prepared the fishing equipment and took Billy to the creek. After some practice he finally hooked a beautiful trout. They were plentiful in the creek but Billy's inexperience didn't help much. But a boy has to learn and Billy figured this was the best and most enjoyable way. Encouragement and "old-timer" tips from Grandfather soon resulted in a string of four nice trout. This would make a splendid breakfast.

It was late evening and the "two old experienced woodsmen" sat around the campfire. They were both tired and this was quite relaxing—a nice ending for a wonderful day. Billy sat staring into the campfire.

Suddenly Billy couldn't believe his eyes! The trout stream was full of a foamy looking substance. They rushed over to the stream to look at the mess and while they looked on in disbelief, a Forest Ranger and another man came up to them. They explained that this mess was a chemical from an industrial plant several miles upstream. Yes, it would kill the fish but it really didn't matter because some careless person across the mountain had started a fire which was raging out of control. Sure enough, Billy could smell the smoke. The fire was heading this way so Billy and Grandfather would have to leave. What a terrible ending to what had begun as a wonderful trip! And worse yet, Billy realized that all the wildlife would be destroyed. He asked the Ranger if something couldn't be done to stop the fire and save the wildlife and if the stream pollution couldn't be stopped. The reply stunned Billy until he was speechless. "Son, the fire, like the stream pollution, really doesn't matter. You won't be hunting here anymore. This gentleman with me has come to enforce legislation which was passed last week. It is now illegal to own a firearm and this government agent is required to confiscate firearms." Sadly the Ranger dropped his head as the government agent walked over and got Grandfather's shotgun. Slowly the two men began to walk away.

Billy's head was whirling—he couldn't think straight. Why hadn't Grandfather tried to do something? Why had he just sat there speechless? What had gone wrong? Things were happening so fast. Everything was so mixed up. Billy had begun the day expecting a whole world of new experiences, learning to appreciate the wonderful world of Nature. But now the whole world had crumbled and fallen on him. Early today he was riding on "cloud nine" and now disaster had struck—the entire experience had turned into an earth shattering disappointment. Billy could stand no more. As the men walked away, he yelled, "No, no! You can't do this!"

Grandfather was shaking Billy. "Wake up! What's wrong?" he asked. Then Billy realized that he had been so tired that he dozed off staring at the campfire and the whole experience was just a bad dream. What a relief. He related the story to his grandfather. Grandfather said, "I guess today was just too much for a young lad on his first trip. It's time for us to turn in for the night. Let's hope your dreaming is over! Before we retire, let's offer our thanks to the Creator for blessing us with the many marvelous things which we are privileged to enjoy."

The two knelt by the dying campfire.

GORGEOUS GREEDY GROSBEAKS

By ADA CLAIRE SNYDER

Warrenton

THE winter of 1968-69 was indeed the Winter of the Grosbeaks in Fauquier and surrounding counties. Reactions were varied.

"When I looked out of my window in early December and saw about 10 grosbeaks, I thought I was seeing things."

"The first sighting of the grosbeaks was unforgettable."

"Most birds come in coveys; grosbeaks come in covers—they cover the ground."

"The evening grosbeaks are just like *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. They stayed four months."

"I'm about to go bankrupt. It's only February and I've bought 120 pounds of seeds since Christmas."

"I feed between 40 and 60 a day, and I love it."

"I have four pairs of grosbeaks who feed with the blue jays and cardinals every morning. It's like turning a black and white winter into technicolor."

friends to bird lovers in the upper Mississippi Valley and slight acquaintances in the New England states. Wherever they go, however, they create excitement. The male with his brilliant yellow body, heavy yellow bill, black crown and tail, and black wings splashed with white is breath-taking. His mate has the same markings, but the greenish-gray body makes her less spectacular.

About five years ago a bird watcher in the Shenandoah Valley wrote the *Richmond Times Dispatch* that he had seen grosbeaks "this far south" for the first time in a lifetime of watching.

A bird watcher in Culpeper said that for some years she has had frequent migratory visits from grosbeaks but, always before, in mid-winter and usually during severe winter weather.

A bird watcher in Warrenton said that she didn't have a

Southern hospitality in the form of abundant handouts of sunflower seed encouraged the visitors to spend the winter.

Commission photo by Kesteloo



"I wouldn't mind spending so much money for sunflower seeds on American birds, but grosbeaks are FOREIGN."

"I would love to have a dozen grosbeaks at my feeding station, but forty are just too many."

"I used to have purple finches in droves, but the greedy, quarrelsome grosbeaks have driven them away. The grosbeaks are beautiful, but I do miss the twitter and talk of the finches."

"It's gotten so expensive that I don't put out the food until noon. The grosbeaks, who are early feeders, finish what's left the next morning."

"Because of their style and beauty their bad manners are excused and they are always welcome guests."

What's happened to the grosbeaks? Bird research indicates that evening grosbeaks are Canadian birds who nest from northern Minnesota northward. In the winter they are old

single grosbeak last winter, but for several years before that she had a few during March.

But this year thousands of evening grosbeaks arrived in Virginia in late November or early December. Since they came in such large numbers, everyone expected them to be overnight callers. Courtesy, neighborliness, and Southern hospitality, however, must have encouraged the visitors to spend the winter. Since their natural food is tree seeds and they do not care for bread, suet, or wild bird seeds, the Virginia hosts and hostesses have been substituting hamburger for steak in order to buy sunflower seeds for their gluttonous winter company.

Even though some bird watchers have pretended to be disgruntled, most bird lovers have felt enriched by the extended stay of the handsome, chic, sociable evening grosbeaks.

CAMP PICKETT'S

Eager Beavers

By WILL GREEN

Staff Writer, Information Office, Ft. Lee

THE problem is that the beavers at Camp Pickett have become entirely too eager with their dam-building. As a result, Colonel William C. McMullin, commanding officer, and the Post Engineers have found themselves reluctantly at odds with a forest friend whose general helpfulness has been widely acknowledged. Unfortunately, they have found it necessary to adopt extreme measures to curtail the beavers' frenzied activity.

For months now, these animals, estimated to be about 750 strong, have been hard at work building dams from one end to the other of this sprawling, 16,000 acre military reservation, located two miles east of Blackstone, Virginia. In many places along the 135 miles of trails used by tanks during field maneuvers, dammed-up culverts have caused extensive flooding and road washouts, seriously hampering military training programs. Eight to 10 acres have been flooded in some places. Recently, when the beavers caused an important construction site to be buried under four feet of water, it was just too much.

A contractor, constructing a 90-mm tank range for the Army, needed to clear a target area of trees. Unhappily, beavers chose the same area to carry out some elaborate construction of their own—a large dam complex. When sawyers were unable to get in to remove the timber, because of inundation where beaver dams had backed up water, the contractor was forced to call a halt to the work while he blew up the dams. The delay was costly and inconvenient.

Since other methods of beaver control had not achieved

It took some gnawing for beavers to cut this large tree at Camp Pickett. In background is beaver pond with dam at far left.

U.S. Army photo by S. Kopels



adequate results, it was clear the time had come when their population would have to be reduced. Consequently, a professional trapper was called in. In the range target area alone he trapped some 56 animals. Within a month he had accounted for more than 100, at various locations. His income derives from their sale, since there is a steady demand for their fur. Also, beaver tail meat is said to be considered a table delicacy.

The decision to trap beavers was not an easy one. The Engineers, working in conjunction with Virginia wildlife experts, had tried other ways to resolve the dilemma. In an effort to prevent dams from being built, creosoted burlap bags were placed over entrances to drainage pipes. This didn't work. Wire screens were erected at the ends of culverts. The beavers apparently were delighted. They used these to give their dams a more solid foundation, and built them higher than ever so that water continued to overflow bridges and roads. On the theory that the night-working animals would not busy themselves in a lighted area, one night lanterns were hung in trees. Camp Pickett authorities swear that the creatures worked harder than ever that particular night. They outdid themselves.

Word of the beaver trapping brought a letter of protest to Colonel McMullin from a 12-year-old Warfield, Virginia, girl. Carole Cheeley wrote that she was "upset and broken-hearted" at the news. The colonel was touched by her concern, and replied: "I want to assure you that we are not trying to eliminate the beaver from Camp Pickett, just reducing the population to manageable limits." In his reply to Carole, he also recalled the history of beavers in Virginia. He commented that, years ago, they had completely disappeared here, and that during the 1930's they were brought in from other states and stocked in various counties.

"As you may know from your observations," the colonel said, "he is an excellent water conservationist. He builds his pond for several reasons, to have a pool of water deep enough to escape his enemies, a place to store his winter food supply, and to make sure the entrance to the lodge is under water."

Colonel McMullin continued: "The personnel responsible for the wildlife management program at Camp Pickett felt that the beaver were a valuable part of the total wildlife population and should be protected as much as possible. Many forms of wildlife benefit from the beaver pond; for example, it furnishes habitat for mink, muskrat, otter and other fur bearers, plus it furnishes winter feeding areas for waterfowl and summer homes for wood duck. In addition, it furnishes breeding and rearing areas for various species of fish."

The colonel invited Carole and her friends to visit, and offered a guide to explain the wildlife program.

The military installation is, in fact, visited by large numbers of young and old alike each year. Boy Scout troops camp here. Classes of school children are given guided tours to see natural resources management at work. Adult and youth groups interested in nature study come to observe in this area which abounds in all forms of wildlife native to these parts. Many bring their cameras. There is also horseback riding along the trails, while 500 acres of water provide excellent opportunities for water skiing. Fishing—10,000 man-days of it last year—is a year-round activity. There were also 9,000 man-days of hunting which took place, in season, over some 31,000 acres. Hunters, both civilian and military, bagged scores of deer, and thousands of rabbits, squirrels, quail, and doves, plus a variety of other game.

Management of wildlife at Camp Pickett is a cooperative arrangement between the Army and the Virginia Com-



J. S. Upson, Camp Pickett engineer, points to wire screen erected to prevent beavers from damming a culvert. It did not work. The beavers went ahead with their dam anyway.

mission of Game and Inland Fisheries. A state biologist comes to the post one day each week to assist with the program. Camp Pickett recently received a Department of Defense citation for meritorious achievement in the National Resources Conservation Program.

The beavers, which have contributed so much toward natural resources management, also have been of help with the installation's water supply. J. S. Upson, the post en-

gineer, showed where they had erected a lengthy dam spanning Cedar Creek. The huge pond created by this—more like a lake—provides an opportunity for silt to settle before the water courses down to a reservoir, which is also used as a source of water by Blackstone.

Mr. Upson says he has seen beaver dams stretching for as much as 200 yards. Some are built in a more-or-less straight line, while others are zig-zag or "U" shaped. Both the mound-shaped lodges where the beaver colonies live, and the "bank holes," where individual older beavers are found, have air vents leading to the surface.

The post engineer pointed out trees, ranging up to 18 inches in diameter, which beavers had gnawed down. The sleek, amphibious animals, which have been found on the post weighing more than 70 pounds, eat the tree bark. If a tree can be felled into the water, they will float it to their dam site to use in their construction. Mud, stones, twigs and grass are also employed in dam building, patted firmly into place by the animals.

Beavers stay constantly at work repairing their dams. If one is destroyed, they can rebuild it completely within 24 hours. "How they manage this in so little time, I don't know," Mr. Upson said. "Perhaps they 'call in troops,' " he speculated. "This much I do know, however—a heck of a lot of engineering know-how goes into their work. They're remarkable creatures."

The engineer estimates there are more than 100 beaver ponds throughout the post serving a useful purpose. At one, several deer could be seen drinking.

He reiterated Colonel McMullin's emphatic comment, putting it this way: "Our aim is not to do away with beavers at this installation—definitely not. We simply want to control them, so we can live with them. Wherever we can leave them to their own devices, we certainly do so. It's only when they disrupt post facilities that we must try to bring them into balance."

Mr. Upson's recognition of beavers in Camp Pickett affairs is reflected officially. Post maps plainly indicate a "Beaver Trail."

Camp Pickett is part of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center, headquartered at Ft. Lee, Virginia, and commanded by Major General Victor J. MacLaughlin.

One of the more ambitious Camp Pickett beaver projects is this dam across Cedar Creek, anchored to a highway bridge.

U.S. Army photo by S. Kopels



BIRDS IN A BOTTLE

By MARY STEVENS JONES
Culpeper

WOULD you believe a bird bottle?

The brown pottery bottle we received for a Christmas present looked to us more like a little brown jug than a bird house, and we would not have known the purpose for which it was intended had not an explanatory sheet from the magazine, *Home Garden*, accompanied it.

Although the bird bottle is the very latest available housing for birds, it's not exactly new because it is Colonial in style and was used in England and Colonial America in the early 18th century.

The first ones in Culpeper were erected last spring. And, now, in our Asher Street back yard, we have bottled birds—a family of wrens. By now, these bottled birds probably have mottled eggs in their nest and we have unthrottled music all day long from the sheltering walnut tree.

The wrens seem happy in their Colonial-style home, which was made at the Williamsburg Pottery Factory and was shipped from the Craft House in Colonial Williamsburg. It is an exact replica of bird bottles that were sold in Williamsburg in the early 1700's. The prototype was excavated last summer from the James Geddy House yard in Williamsburg, and reproductions are now being made at the pottery factory.

The restoration excavators, themselves, probably did not recognize the pottery bottles without some research. It was discovered that the 1746 inventory of John Burdett, who kept an ordinary at Edinburg Castle, on Williamsburg's Duke of Gloucester Street, included "16 bird bottles" among the earthenware items, along with a garden pot, a chimney flower pot and the like. Still earlier evidence of the bird bottle is to be found in old paintings and engravings.

Now the Williamsburg Pottery Factory, at Lightfoot, is making the bird bottles according to precise measurements taken from the original. The bottles are made of James City County clay, hand thrown and turned on a potter's wheel. They are coated with transparent waterproof glaze as were the 18th-century originals.

All that is needed to hang the bottles is a stout nail or screw. A small twig goes through the hole to make the perch, and there is a drainage hole in the bottom of the bottle in case rain should find its way through the entrance.

Ours was hung in May under eaves of the garage and under the shade of a tall walnut tree. With high hopes, we watched and waited.

By June 23, the wrens that nest perennially in a house on the Nottinghams' front porch, just across the street, had built, hatched and raised a family, and flown a family. We were discouraged and felt that our bird bottle had been rejected.

At this time, although we had wrens singing in our back yard almost constantly, they apparently had not even noticed the Colonial home offered them rent-free. We think now, however, they had noticed it and had been scouting it out for some time. The latter part of that week, we noticed great activity and constant bickering among some wrens that we first thought were a pair but later concluded were a threesome. A wren, or wrens, had started building a nest in the bird bottle, for the sticks were clearly visible at the entrance, but whenever one bird tried to enter the bottle there was another there to fight it off, while a third wren chattered in the walnut tree. Alas! the eternal triangle, we thought.

After about four days of musical argument by the garrulous, distraught birds, things quieted down. One wren still sang, rather plaintively, we thought, in the walnut tree; we saw him enter the bottle occasionally but we thought only one wren was left on the premises.

Then, after several days, we realized there was a pair. When one wren flew into the bottle, her mate was there in the tree singing happily. Domestic tranquility prevailed.

My reasoning about these recent backyard happenings may be all wrong. Until I read in *Birds of America* the chapter on house wrens, I had always thought they had an ideal family life, possibly just because they sound so happy and are known for their good housekeeping habits. Now, I have learned that Jenny Wren, in truth, is a bit of a shrew, a fussy, scolding mite.

"Johnny Wren," this book states, "is likely to present a pretty good imitation of a hen-pecked husband, for the moment he promises to love, cherish and obey Jenny, he hardly dares say his soul is his own. However he doesn't appear to be in the least depressed by this state of affairs, for his babbling song is one of the merriest and most spontaneous of bird utterances."

Another writer in *Birdcraft* has this to say: "We always speak of Jenny Wren—always refer to the wren as 'she' as we do a ship. It is Johnny Wren who sings and disports himself generally, but it is Jenny who, by dint of much fussing and scolding, keeps herself well to the front. She chooses the building site and settles all the little domestic details. If Johnny doesn't like her choice he may go away and stay away; she will remain where she has taken up her abode and make a second matrimonial venture."

So, now, we don't know just what the fussin' and feudin' was all about. Maybe Johnny prefers contemporary to



Pottery bird bottle made to precise measurements taken from 18th century originals. Twig stuck in hole in "handle" provides a perch.

A House For Crested Flycatchers

By JOYCE FITCHETT RUSSELL
Kilmarnock

HE slammed the screen door in a fury seldom vented by a stoic fourteen-year-old, and stormed up the stairs. His perturbed mother followed. What on earth was the matter?

"Those little kids tore up the crested flycatchers' nest in the neighbor's newspapers box."

How did he know it was not a sparrow's nest?

"Because there was a snakeskin woven in and flycatchers ALWAYS use snakeskins to ward off enemies."

She doubted but did not challenge.

Equipped with a Boy Scout manual he had acquired the preceding winter for specifications on birdfeeders, he urgently requested transportation to his father's business. There, in a commercial shop, he could always find scraps of lumber, nails and hammer for his construction projects.

In a short while, his father returned him smiling and bearing a box especially built for a crested flycatcher's preferences. Like the illustration in his hooklet, the house bore a sign under the roof, "For Rent."

He chose a sycamore directly opposite the kitchen double window, some fifty feet away, and erected the house eight feet from the ground.

Three hours later, incredibly, a strange bird was inspecting the house. The teen-ager brought books that identified the newcomer as a crested flycatcher, indeed, and substantiated the snakeskin habit he had mentioned. He was convinced the "For Rent" sign had attracted them.

The conspicuous cinnamon back, lemon stomach and slight crest were quickly recognized field marks, and the bird's size was that of the familiar redbird. His call proved to be an even more unique means of identification, for once the frequent "Weep, We-ee-yeep," was noted, it could never be confused or forgotten.

By the next morning, both birds were bringing twigs to the

house, taking turns inside, loudly proclaiming their territory and furiously challenging all passersby.

Sometimes one hovered at the doorway and was unable to enter; consequently, the boy affixed a sturdy forked stick beneath the opening, so that the birds were able to perch, check the safety of their surroundings and enter at will.

Quiet shortly prevailed and perhaps three weeks passed with only an occasional silent changing of the guard or a rare attack on a starling inadvertently landing close by. Then began the constant feeding forays, as the parents flew often in opposite directions and returned in their peculiar loping flight, with bills crammed with insects. The territory they protected was large, for they would disappear across wide fields on both sides of the neighborhood and into the distant woods.

Standing beneath the box, one could hear the unmistakable "Weep" of the babies. Then one afternoon a baby perched at the doorway and considered the world outside. His parents' vigorous presentation of dinner discouraged his adventurous inclinations for that day.

The next day, however, the birdwatcher raised his binoculars and gasped as the tiny bird headed toward him. He ducked just in time to avoid what could have been a fatal collision. The little flycatcher landed safely, stretched himself tall, erected his sparce crest and announced proudly, "Weep!"

Moments later two boys and their dogs attracted his attention and he flew in their direction, again narrowly missing disaster.

A weaker but willing sibling soon joined him, and the parents set about engineering them both to a forsythia bush for the night.

Next morning they were nowhere to be seen nor heard, but several weeks later from different treetops came the welcome calls "Weep" and "Wee-ee-yeep."

Birds in a Bottle (Continued from page 22)

Colonial architecture and objected to Jenny's choice of the bird bottle. Or maybe he just wanted to lend a helping hand with the interior decorating and Jenny, fussy little housewife that she is, objected to his rearranging the furniture; and whether the third member of the triangle was male or female—these are some of the things we'll never know.

We do know that wrens like the convenience of man-made houses, especially when they are placed under house cornices or eaves, but they also build in the most unlikely and preposterous places. They have been known to build their nests—made of twigs, grass, and string and lined with soft strips of bark, down or feathers—in a scarecrow's pocket, the pocket of a pair of trousers hanging on the clothes line, a cannon's mouth, a roadside newspaper tube, and hollow limbs or trunks of trees. In my childhood, we had no trouble getting tenants for wren houses made of cigar boxes, and our next-door neighbors, the George Newmans, when they arrived two summers ago to live in their renovated

house, found wrens living in a dangling electric meter. Since they, like most Culpeper residents, are bird lovers, they waited until the young birds had flown to attach the meter to the house.

The house wren is known to have homing instincts, and, so, we hope our tenants, all problems resolved, will find their bottle home comfortable and pleasant and will return.

Since they chose it over various other types of housing available in our neighborhood—including high-rise apartments, two-family flats, Swiss chalets, and Boy Scout-made houses, we think they must appreciate Colonial architecture. And because any Colonial Williamsburg reproduction—be it houses, furniture, silver, or pottery—is greatly in demand, we think our wrens were pretty smart to recognize a good thing when they saw it.

We wonder if they furnished their home in antiques. We can see some walnut pieces through the entrance.



Edited by HARRY GILLAM

The Big Ones Are Biting



H. E. Harrell, Sr., of Jarratt, Virginia, holds his 8 pound 1 ounce prize from Harrell's Mill Pond. He landed the scrappy largemouth on a cane pole.



William S. Clary, of LaCrosse, holds the 8 pound 8 ounce largemouth from Buggs Island that earned him a Trophy Fish Citation.

Information Service Has The Answers

The Commonwealth of Virginia has established a statewide travel and vacation information service in Richmond, available to Virginians as well as visitors to the capital city.

Operated by the Virginia State Travel Service, the office is located in the lobby of the Ninth Street Office Building at Ninth and Grace Streets across from the State Capitol. It is open Monday through Friday, from 8:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Service is available to walk-in visitors, by telephone and mail. The telephone

is 770-4484. All publications and services are free.

Mrs. Betsy Roberts, Travel Director, an experienced travel counselor, will mark a routing on an official State highway map and will assist in making hotel, motel and resort reservations.

Available are a dozen State brochures and about 350 other publications on cities and towns; historic shrines, gardens and museums; Civil War battlefield parks; ocean, bay, river and mountain resorts; honeymoon attractions; skiing, fresh and salt water fishing; boating, boat landings and marinas; natural wonders; flying in Virginia for private planes, camping grounds, golf courses, water impoundments, climate, industrial tours, tours of Virginia, important events and accommodations.

New Wrinkle in Pollution Battle

A Houston, Texas, scientist, Robert Pruessner of Petro-Tex Chemical Corporation, has developed a technique for training bacteria to eat specific chemical substances in industrial waste. The process actually accelerates natural selection and results in a new strain of bacteria with a preference for the particular substance to be removed. A healthy colony of bacteria is fed ever increasing amounts of the desired substance and smaller amounts of regular food until only those able to handle the changed diet remain. These may then be transferred to the company's waste treatment facility to do their work.

To demonstrate the usefulness of its process, Petro-Tex has a small pond through which the final effluent flows. Water hyacinths, fish, nutria, turtles, and even an alligator inhabit the pond. Perhaps if all industries were required to put their final effluent on public display by running it past the entrance to their main office, they would have a different attitude about pollution.

Shooting Preserve Career Training Offered

September 1 will be the starting date for the third in a series of shooting preserve trainee programs sponsored by Winchester-Western and Ralston Purina.

Two trainees will be selected for the 10 month course and will receive \$300 per month while gaining on-the-job experience supplemented with textbook training.

The training session will begin at Nilo Farms near Brighton, Illinois, where the trainees will cover preserve management and dog handling. They will transfer to Ralston-Purina in St. Louis for the game bird husbandry phase about the first of March.

Applicants must be between 20 and 50 years of age, capable of and willing to perform manual labor, have a high school education and be of good character and in good health. Candidates interested in the program should write for application blanks to either the Conservation Department, Winchester Western Division, Olin, East Alton, Illinois 62024, or Public Relations Department, Ralston-Purina Company, St. Louis, Missouri 63199. The deadline for applications is July 1, 1969.

Conservation Council Gets Start

A newly formed group, the Conservation Council of Virginia, has elected as its president Dr. Richard T. Marks of the Extension Service of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. The purpose of the Council is to serve as a coordinating agency between the various state conservation organizations in working for the conservation, preservation and wise use of Virginia's natural and historic resources. The group held its first convention at Skyland in Shenandoah Park early in May.

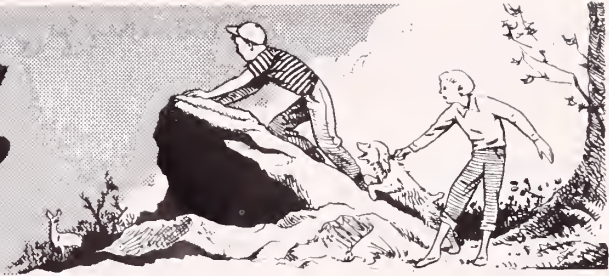
Hiram Zigler, natural resources coordinator for the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, was named vice-president, and Royster Lyle of Lexington, Director of the Marshall Library, was elected secretary-treasurer.

Robert T. Dennis of Fairfax, J. Robert Hicks, Jr., of Richmond, and Mrs. Marjorie Fletcher of Lexington were elected directors-at-large.

The Council set up five committees covering water control, river basins, clean air, land-use and outdoor recreation.

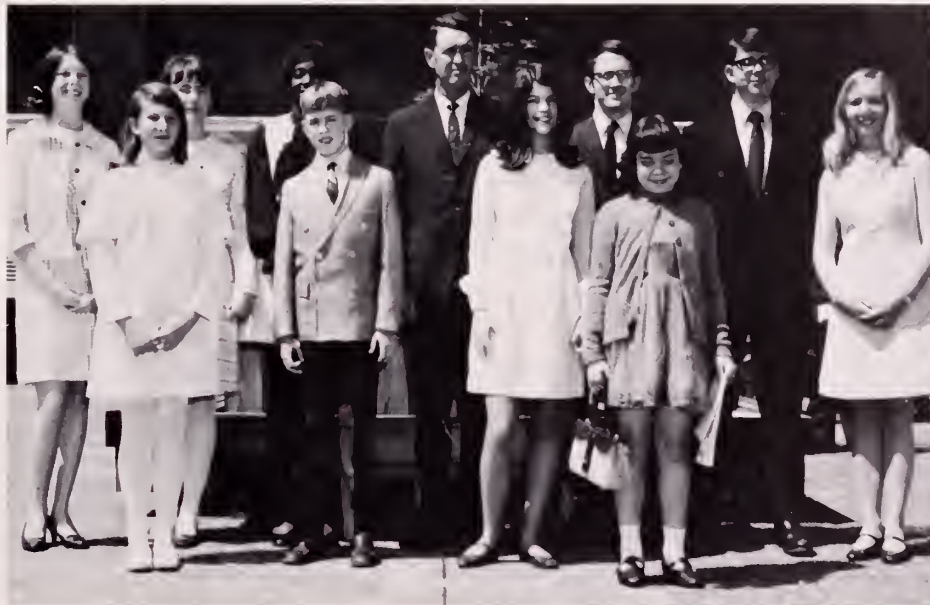


YOUTH AFIELD



Edited by ANN PILCHER

Wildlife Essay Awards Presented



Commission photo by Kesteloo

Shown with Governor Godwin's Executive Assistant, Archer L. Yeatts, are scholarship and grand prize winners of the 22nd Annual Wildlife Essay Contest. Back row, from left: Bliss Hastings, Peggy Childress, Faye Walker, David Ritchie, William Ferrara, and Joanne Knutson. Front: Connie Dobbins, Hugh Slusser, Laurie Walton, Diane Ennis.

Ten Virginia school children and 37 school officials assembled in the auditorium of the Madison Building April 25, where Governor Godwin's Executive Assistant Archer L. Yeatts presented cash awards for the 22nd Annual Wildlife Essay Contest, coordinated by S. O. Newman of the Game Commission's Education Division. Joanne Ellen Knutson of Wakefield High in Arlington was awarded the top prize, a \$1,000 scholarship. Miss Knutson was a grand prize winner in the 11th grade last year. A second scholarship of \$400 was presented to David Woodfin Ritchie of Hampton High School.

Grand prize winners, each receiving a \$50 cash award, were: *12th grade*, Bliss Hastings of Lee Davis High, Hanover County; *11th grade*, Laurie Walton, Lee Davis High, Hanover County; *10th grade*, Peggy June Childress of Buckingham Central High, Buckingham County; *9th Grade*, Faye Walker, Buckroe Jr. High, Hampton; *8th Grade*, William Ferrara of St. John's Jr. High, Fairfax County; *7th Grade*, Hugh Slusser, Jr., of Lylburn Downing Elementary, Lexington; *6th Grade*, Connie Dobbins of McHarg Elementary, Radford; and *5th Grade*, Diane Ennis of Highland View Elementary, Bristol. Thirty-seven schools

100% Participation Schools

Callaghan Elementary (Alleghany)
Falling Spring Elementary (Alleghany)
Bland High and Elementary (Bland)
Eagle Rock Elementary (Botetourt)
Highland View Elementary (Bristol)
Brunswick Academy (Brunswick)
Gladesboro Elementary (Carroll)
Vaughan Jr. High (Carroll)
Venable Elementary (Charlottesville)
Deep Creek Jr. High (Chesapeake)
Ettrick Elementary (Chesterfield)
Falling Creek Elementary (Chesterfield)
Boyce Elementary (Clarke)
Clarke Co. Intermediate (Clarke)
Colonial Heights Jr. High (Col. Heights)
Gainesboro (Frederick)
Handley Elementary (Frederick)
Stonewall Elementary (Frederick)
Emporia Elementary (Greensville)
York Academy (King & Queen)
Jonesville Elementary (Lee)
Mineral Elementary (Louisa)
Kenbridge Day School (Lunenburg)
Wilton Elementary (Middlesex)
Lightfoot Elementary (Orange)
Orange Intermediate (Orange)
Marumsc Hills Elementary (Prince William)
Woodrow Wilson High (Portsmouth)
McHarg Elementary (Radford)
Green Valley Elementary (Roanoke)
W. H. Keister Elementary (Rockingham)
Swords Creek Elementary (Russell)
Spotswood Elementary (Spotsylvania)
Cleveland Elementary (Washington)
Hayter's Gap Elementary (Washington)
Holston High (Washington)
Washington-Lee Elementary (Washington)

were awarded \$10 prizes for having 100% participation.

Some 16,564 students wrote essays on this year's subject, "Clean Air." The contest is sponsored jointly by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League of America. Nearly 200 lesser prizes were awarded to runners up in the various grades, total prize money amounting to \$3,600.

—H. L. GILLAM
Information Officer

March 30, Lucky Date for Two Young Anglers

Both Donald Hash's 7 lb. brown trout (left) and Kyle E. Dabney's 9 lb. largemouth bass were captured on March 30. Although not a state record, the 24 inch brown is the largest reported from Smith Mountain Lake to date (records show an 11 pounder taken from Philpott Reservoir holding high place for browns). Kyle, who lives in Mineral, took the 24½ inch bass on a spinning rod from the family pond.



Joint Trophy

William Puckett and son, Marc, display a 31 inch, 12 pound 3 ounce wall-eyed pike they caught in New River in late March while fishing from the bank with a plug. The Virginia state record for walleye is a 17 pounder taken from New River in 1965.

Courtesy Pulaski Southwest Times





ON THE WATERFRONT

Edited by JIM KERRICK

Boats Need Pre-Season Care

Pre-season care is the prescription for your boat and its equipment. Time taken now to check your outfit will go a long way toward making a more pleasant summer afloat.

There is no reason for the boatman to put off working on his craft until late spring. Many enjoyable hours can be spent now in leisurely work. Indeed, do you remember the many little things that you deferred in preference to time on the water, last season? Things, perhaps, like re-routing the fuel lines under the gunwales so that they're not underfoot? Or sanding and refinishing that spot on the foredeck where Jimmy dropped the anchor two seasons ago? Off-season is the time to get these things done.

Getting to the mechanics of setting your boat up each spring, you should tilt the boat up on its trailer, remove the drain plug, and give the hull a thorough washing, inside and out with warm water and a mild detergent.

You may find that you have to use a putty knife, a wire brush, or steel wool, to remove the more persistent growth from the bottom of the hull in order to get the clean, smooth finish important for good performance.

Hardware should be checked for corrosion and for pitting. Use of a good polish and plenty of elbow grease should restore most of the luster, but in some cases badly damaged hardware may have to be replaced.

All equipment should be thoroughly inspected at the beginning of each season. Faulty life preservers may seem OK as seat cushions, but they won't be much help if they are called upon to keep you afloat in an emergency. Cushions don't last forever. Dispose of them when they show excessive wear. Check straps and buckles particularly.

An anchor is a relatively trouble-free item that is almost impervious to use and abuse. Not so anchor lines. When the anchor line goes, so does the anchor. The anchor line is probably subject to more stress than almost anything else on the boat. Check it regularly for wear,

for fraying, and for rot.

Be sure to check the steering system for loose cables and pulleys. To insure complete control, cables should be tight, untwisted, and free of excessive wear.

The electrical system is extremely important. It is susceptible to deterioration during the off-season if it has not been cared for properly. Make sure that running lights and other accessories are in proper working order, and that the wiring is in good condition. If your boat is equipped with an automatic type battery, check for cracks and corrosion on the battery and cables. Make it a point to start the season with a full battery charge.



Photo courtesy Evinrude Motors
Check trailer wheel bearings—repack and switch tires.

Many boat owners spend a lot of time working on their boats, but pay little attention to maintenance of boat trailers. If you own a trailer, inspect its tires for wear. See that they are properly inflated. Pull the wheels and check the bearings. Remember, bearings are immersed in water every time you launch or haul your boat. Water can pass the seals and rust the bearings. Bearings should be inspected and packed with grease at least once a season.

Be sure that the rollers on the trailer turn freely. Check and lubricate the coupling mechanism. If the trailer is equipped with lights, a thin coating of waterproof grease or vaseline will keep the light sockets from corroding.

These suggestions should guarantee boating fun. Care backs that guarantee.

Predict Winds

Most of us are about as successful in predicting winds as we are at predicting baseball scores.

Sometimes our predictions are perfect, but usually we miss by more than we care to. The same is true with guessing how fast and from what direction the wind will blow. However, by memorizing a few simple rules you can become a real expert at anticipating winds.

Clouds are a great aid in predicting the breezes. High flying cirrus clouds (mare's tails) presage rising wind and the direction from which it will blow. Billowy white cumulus clouds are created by areas of ascending air during warm weather, and heavy winds can be found in their vicinity. When on large bodies of water, steer clear of them.

When low, gray, solid stratus clouds blot out the sky, a steady wind usually comes with them and remains as long as they do—for up to three days. Smooth water will return with clearing skies.

Changes in wind direction and velocity can be anticipated by observing smoke from fires. If smoke climbs straight and slowly, the air is very quiet and there should be no worries about winds. If it wavers and breaks as it climbs, there is turbulence which suggests winds to come. If it climbs and then flattens out, masses of warm and cold air are meeting at that level—look out for rain! When smoke spreads out at water level, the air is full of dampness and fog is likely.

Predicting the wind is not impossible, although few take the trouble to learn these simple rules. Try it this summer and see how accurate your predictions are.

Blue Oil Ends Guesswork

Outboard boaters this season have something new to look forward to. No longer will they have to wonder whether they have added oil to their gasoline. A new blue 50-1 oil has been introduced to eliminate guesswork.

When mixed with gasoline, this blue colored oil colors the gasoline blue. You might say it takes the blues out of boating by adding them to the gasoline.

Bird
of the
Month:



Orchard Oriole

By DR. J. J. MURRAY
Lexington

THE orchard oriole is not so brilliant in color as its cousin, the Baltimore oriole, but there are those who think it quite as lovely. The male Baltimore is orange and black; the male orchard oriole is chestnut and black. The rump and breast are chestnut. The rest of the plumage, except for white edgings to the smaller wing feathers, is black.

The female is a dull yellow-green, with darker wings. It is more greenish than the female Baltimore oriole. The male in its first year is colored like the female, but with a black throat.

There are many who think that the song of the orchard oriole is superior to that of the Baltimore. The Orchard certainly has a great variety in its songs. Often the bird will sing while in flight. Its more usual song is a series of eager and brilliant notes, with a pattern that varies from song to song and from bird to bird. It is not helped by the harsher, rattling notes introduced at times.

One of the interesting things about both orioles is the fact that, bright as is the male, it is often difficult to see the singing, chattering bird. Both species are much more

often heard than seen. They seem to like sycamore trees, and are able to hide behind a single sycamore leaf.

The nest of the orchard oriole resembles that of its kinsman, a purse-like structure, woven of grasses and lined with soft materials. It is neither so deep nor so elaborate as that of the Baltimore. Nor is it usually so high above ground. While the Baltimore oriole may build its nest as high as 90 feet, the nest of the orchard oriole is not often above 25 feet. Both, at least in western Virginia, seem to like the vicinity of a pond or stream.

The females of both species lay from four to six eggs. Basically the eggs of the orchard oriole are bluish-white, but this color is overlaid with scrawls of several shades of brownish or purplish.

This bird is a summer resident all over Virginia. It seems to be more common than the Baltimore east of the Blue Ridge but less common generally in the Valley. At Lexington they seem to be about equally common. The orchard oriole is found in Virginia from late April to late September. Egg-laying begins around the middle of May, and young are found around the first of June.

BOATERS ... NOW HEAR THIS!

**INLAND
WATER
TRAFFIC
SIGNS**

MEANING



**BOATS
KEEP OUT**



**BE CAREFUL;
DANGER IN AREA**



**CONTROLLED
AREA**

PRINTED INFORMATION MAY BE WITH THE SYMBOLS .. *READ IT !*

**CHANNEL OR
SAFE ROAD
MARKERS**



**TRAVEL BETWEEN BLACK
AND RED MARKERS -
TO THE RIGHT OF
STRIPED MARKERS**



**DISTRESS!
HELP US!**



**DIVERS!
STAY AWAY**

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Boaters will find these explanatory signs at many of the Game Commission's boating access and launching facilities where regulatory markers have been established.